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The bulletin is written in a comprehensive and interesting manner. It should prove valuable to those who are looking forward to entering some field of trade since it points out the requirements and remunerations of responsible positions and the possibilities for advance in the various types of positions in retail organizations.

JAMES VAUGHN

A method of evaluating textbooks.—The considerations involved in the selection of textbooks for use in public schools are matters of vital consequence for the pupils. The growing tendency to leave the choice of the books for any given school to the teachers and supervisors of instruction in that school places upon these officials the responsibility of equipping themselves to perform this duty effectively. As a means of making the procedure of textbook evaluation more systematic and more intelligent, one author¹ suggests the use of a detailed outline which calls for a judgment rating of the book examined on a number of points which are assumed to be essential for the purposes the book is to serve.

The author first discusses the value of the textbook as a tool in teaching and then describes the methods commonly employed in selecting books for school use and the factors which receive most consideration. The length of the term for which adoptions of texts are made and the question of public or private ownership are considered, the advantages and disadvantages of the plans described being noted. The discussion then turns to the standards which ought to be employed as a basis of evaluation of school texts. Feeling that the mistakes commonly made by those who undertake a comparison of a number of texts with a view to selecting the one most suitable for a specified purpose are due to an overemphasis upon certain factors of minor importance, the author urges an "exhaustive examination" of the proposed texts and specifies the standards which should be employed in making such an examination.

There are three classes of standards which may aid in evaluating school books. First, there are the standards which should be employed in judging the content and organization of the text. These, according to the author's conception, include the specific purpose of the book, accuracy and reliability of the material, freedom from bias and dogmatism, attention to relative values and the results of scientific studies in education, the illustrations, index, references, charts, diagrams, etc. A second group of standards, of lesser importance than the first but requiring consideration, relates to the reputation of the author and of the publisher and the date of the copyright. Finally, certain standards as to the form of the book should be applied. These have to do with the general appearance, binding, quality of paper, the type, and the size of the

¹ C. R. MAXWELL, *The Selection of Textbooks*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921. Pp. x+139.

book. As a guide for the use of these standards in examining books, two series of outlines are presented, one consisting of general considerations applicable to all textbooks, and one comprising a number of specific outlines for use in evaluating texts in certain fields.

The book is the result of a thoughtful consideration of the problem and possesses several distinctive merits. The case for the co-operative method of selecting texts by competent persons responsible for the results of instruction is well stated; the suggestion that the unit of organization which is found most effective for supervision is the logical unit for the adoption of textbooks is certainly rational; while the author's insistence upon greater consideration for the needs of the children who will use the texts expresses a point of view that cannot be overemphasized. The suggested outlines, of course, have the advantage of any analytical method in that they require some attention to all important factors and tend to secure for each the consideration which its significance warrants.

As to the effectiveness of these particular outlines, however, there is nothing on which one may base a judgment. The reader wonders what differences would be revealed, for example, in two texts in geometry when each item in the proposed outline had been "judged" as *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, or *poor*, and what, in the end, any sort of summation of these judgments would indicate as to the advantage of one book over another of similar type as a text for a specified school or class. Perhaps the author's better opportunity to show the value of his scheme of analysis would have been through the presentation of a few examples of ratings of widely known texts when so examined either by himself or by other competent judges. Without such objective evidence of the practical value of the outlines proposed, the conclusion of the discussion might more appropriately have urged the individual charged with the duty of selecting books for school use to prepare his own outline, drawing upon these and any others available for suggestions. There would thus be nothing lost of the author's forceful plea for a rigid examination of the text under consideration, and the person responsible for the selection would not be at a disadvantage in attempting to judge the book on bases which may be neither significant to him nor of any vital importance for the purposes for which the selection is made.

N. B. HENRY

American higher education for foreign students.—The havoc wrought by the war has served greatly to emphasize the responsibilities and the opportunities of American colleges and universities for service to students from other countries. The diverse character and purpose of our higher institutions make necessary a considerable amount of educational guidance for the foreign student in order that he may find the particular type of school which fits his needs.

With this purpose in view, the Bureau of Education has prepared, from time to time, special bulletins giving a general informational survey of American